FISHING WITH

HOOK AND LINE.

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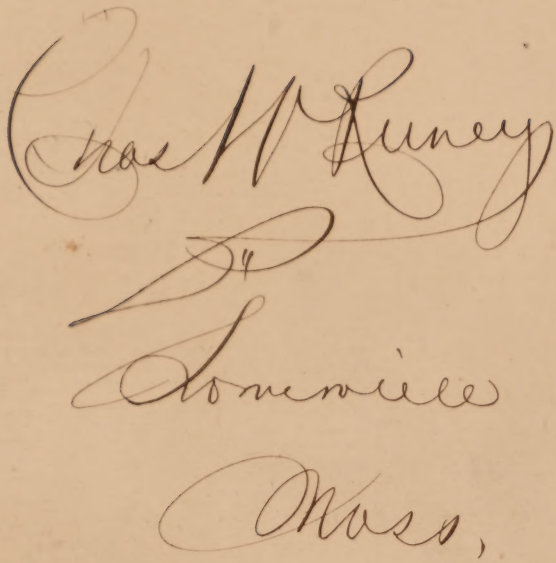

SALMON.

FISHING

WITH HOOK AND LINE;

A

MANUAL FOR AMATEUR ANGLERS.

CONTAINING ALSO

Descriptions of Popular Fishes, and their Habits,

Preparation of Baits, &c. &c.

BY FRANK FORRESTER.

NEW YORK:

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TOOLS FOR FISHING.

Rods.

Fishing rods are now usually made from the bamboo, the Calcutta reed, or of ash wood, as it is necessary they should be made light, tough, and pliable. The butts are frequently made of maple, with bored bottom; and this butt will outlast several tops. Rods for travellers are made in joints, so as to be easily transported. The cost of rods at the tackle stores is $1 50 and $2 50 up to $5 for ordinary ones; and $10, $15, $20, and even as high as $50 for the best and most scientific articles. Some of them are made to be used as a walking canes until needed for sport. A perfect rod should gradually taper from end to end, be tight in all its joints, and be equally and uniformly pliable, not bending in one place more than another. The different lengths of rods required in fishing are mentioned in describing the tackle used in catching different fish. It is therefore only necessary to say that they vary from 12 to 20 feet in length.

Reels.

Some sportsmen do not consider reels necessary; but this is because they have either never used them, or never had a good article. American made reels

are now considered the best in the market, particularly for taking large fish. The smaller English reel will do very well for trout fishing. There are two kinds, viz.: the plain reel, and the multiplying reel. Some prefer the former; but the multiplying reel saves a good deal of time, and is easily worked when you get accustomed to it. Reels are made of brass, and of German silver. Either article is as good as the other.

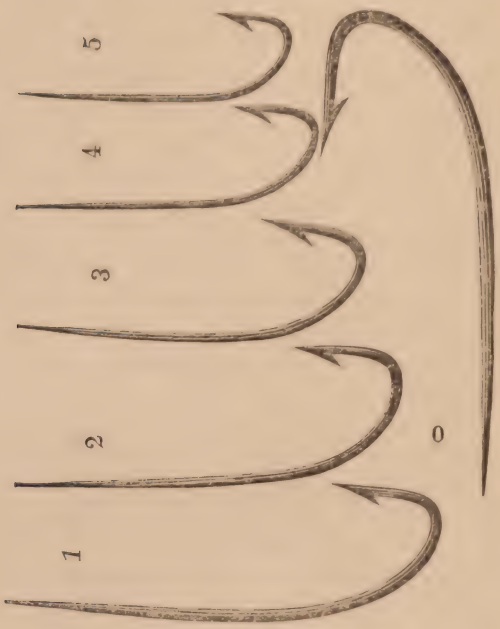
Lines.

Lines are made of India grass, of silk alone, silk and hair, of hemp, of flax, and of cotton. Gut lines are also made, but are not easily managed. The best trout lines are made of India grass, though silk, or silk and hair are frequently used in trout fishing. Trout lines are usually from eight to eighteen yards long, and of various degrees of fineness according to the size of the fish angled for, or clearness of the stream. Salmon, bass, and pickerel lines are made from hemp, flax, silk, grass or hair, and vary in length from 30 to 150 yards. Cotton and hemp lines are made for trolling purposes, and for fishing sea-fish generally. The length of these will vary according to the condition or depth of your fishing grounds. The size of all lines should vary according to the state of the streams or size of your fish. Clear streams require as small lines as will answer the purpose. If you have a good multiplying reel, the line should be as long as the reel will carry.

Hooks.

The old Kirby hook is now generally superseded by the Limerick, which is considered the best fish hook made. We subjoin the different sizes and numbers, which will be hereafter referred to in these pages. In cases where we have recommended the Kirby, you will find the size of that hook to correspond exactly with the numbers of the Limerick. The trout hook is used for the small fry, while the salmon hook is attached to the tackle for catching that fish, and also other large lake and river fish, weak-fish, &c.

LIMERICK TROUT HOOK.



LIMERICK SALMON HOOK.

Besides the regular Limerick and Kirby hooks, whose sizes and numbers correspond with the foregoing plates, we have given on the cover of this work a plate of "black-fish hooks," of different patterns and sizes for bottom fishing—also pickerel hooks, the snap-spring hook, &c., with numbers and explanations. You should examine the point and barb of each hook to see that it is perfect, and file it if it is not. Always have a small file with you.

Sinkers and Swivels.

The ordinary plain sinker is made of lead, shaped round like a pipe-stem, and swelling out in the middle. There are loops of brass wire on either end to attach the line. The weight is from a quarter of an ounce for trout fishing up to a couple of pounds or more for sea bass and porgies. The swivel sinker is similar to the plain one, except that instead of loops, there are swivels on each end to attach the line. This is a decided improvement, as it prevents the line from twisting and tangling. In trolling, swivel sinkers are indispensable. The slide sinker, for bottom fishing, is a leaden tube which allows the line to slip through it, when the fish bites. This is an excellent arrangement, inasmuch as you feel the smallest bite, whereas in the other case the fish must first move the sinker before you feel him. Split shot are sometimes put on trout lines in place of a sinker. Independent swivels are useful in some kinds of fishing to prevent the entanglement of your line.

Leaders.

The silk-worm gut is almost imperceptible in water, and for leaders therefore is the best possible substance. The gut is taken from the worm just as it is ready to spin, and its size varies with the size of the insect, some being as fine as a horse-hair, and others ten times that size. The strands are usually from nine inches to two feet in length, and are just suited to leaders. The tackle stores supply these leaders,

with hooks fastened to them, and with loops ready to attach to your line. The best gut leaders are of Spanish manufacture. Leaders of twisted horse-hair, or of grass, are used when gut cannot be obtained, but they should be made as light as possible.

Floats.

A very light float should be used for trout if you use any at all. It is made from quills or cork. For pickerel, salmon, bass, &c., you should get floats made from hollow red cedar, which are very light and appropriate. Cork will answer if you cannot procure the cedar.

Other Tools.

Nets for landing your fish, nets for carrying bait, gaff-hooks, and clearing rings are among the "tools" of the angler, and can be procured at the tackle stores. They are sometimes very useful. The gaff-hook is used to land your fish in cases where the landing net is impracticable. It is a large hook fastened to a hickory handle. The clearing ring is a stout ring to encircle your line, and send down and clear it. It opens with a hinge, and weighs five to eight ounces.

Baits.

The common angle-worm is a universal bait for fresh water angling. They grow almost everywhere except in sandy soils. The common white grub is

also used successfully in trout fishing. They are found in fresh ploughed earth, and under old stumps, decaying foliage, &c. The grasshopper is also good for trout in his season. The trout or salmon spawn will attract trout quicker than any other possible bait, but it is not always to be had. Catapillars, flies, locusts, beetles, &c., are good for trout.

Live bait consists of the minnow, the shiner, (or mullet,) the gold-fish, and other small fish. Ponds of these fish are kept by those who furnish baits, and by some habitual sportsmen.

The frog is an excellent bait for pickerel. They are sometimes used whole, but in cases where you use the hind legs only, they should be skinned.

For salt-water fishing, the shrimp is the leading bait. The shedder-crab, in its season, is most excellent, particularly for striped bass. The soft-shell clam, cut in small pieces, is a good bait for many kinds of sea fish. The horse-mackerel, or small blue fish is an excellent bait. Where the tide runs swift, use the tail, leaving on the fins.

PREPARING BAITS.—We have before said that salmon-roe was an excellent bait for trout. The roe of large trout or salmon-trout is just as good. These are tempting baits for many other fresh water fish besides the trout. Old fishermen preserve it as follows: First put it in warm water, not hot enough to scald much —then separate the membranous films— rinse it well in cold water and hang it up to dry. The next day salt it with two ounces of salt and a

quarter of an ounce of saltpetre to the pound of roe. Let it stand another day and then spread it to dry. When it becomes stiff put it in small pots, pouring over each some melted mutton tallow. You can then use a pot of preparation as you may want it for bait. It is excellent for trout, and indeed for almost any fry in fresh water.

Angle-worms are thus prepared: Take a lot of common moss and wash it in clean water, press it until nearly dry, then put it in an earthen pot with your worms. In a few days the worms will look exceedingly bright, and be tough and active. If you wish to preserve them longer, you have only to take out the moss, wash it, sponge it, and return it to the pot. Repeat this process every three or four days and your worms will be in excellent condition as long as you desire to keep them.

Pastes for Bait.—The English are famous for paste baits, some of which are made as follows: Shrimp paste is made from shrimps, being prepared in every respect similar to the salmon-roe, before given. Wheat, rye, barley and other grains, soaked in water, and then boiled in milk, are good baits for small fish in still water. Soft bread and honey, kneaded together, is a good bait. Grated cheese worked into paste with soft bread, honey, and saffron, is frequently used. Tallow chandlers' scraps, fresh scalded to separate the slimy particles—these particles are then mixed with clay and bran, and are a good ground bait. It is only good when fresh made

FISHING.

The Salmon.

This most delicious of fish sometimes grows to an immense size for a frequenter of fresh water. Some isolated specimens in Scotland are said to have attained from seventy to eighty pounds. The usual length of the salmon, however, is from two to three and a half feet, and its weight varies from twenty to thirty-two pounds. They are of a silvery gray color on the sides, spotted with irregular reddish spots—the belly is white, and the back a dark blue. When first taken from the water its colors are beautiful. Salmon begin to run up certain Northern rivers in April, and stay there until the latter end of July, when they return to the sea. It is while thus running that they are taken by anglers and salmon fishermen. They deposit their spawn at the extreme point that they reach on the river, and by the time they return, the young fry are ready to return with them. The same young ones follow their parents up the river the year following, having grown to be about six inches in length. At the end of the second year they weigh from five to seven pounds, and it takes them six years to attain their growth.

The salmon, like the trout, is timid and easily frightened. When they become alarmed they move very rapidly in the water, and go a great distance without stopping. It is, therefore, necessary to be extremely cautious in fishing them, and requires skill and perseverence. The most wary and scientific anglers have their patience tried in taking this fish, whose instinct leads it to astonishingly artful and singular efforts to escape. The feeding grounds of the salmon are swift streams, and deep lakes, with gravelly and pebbly bottoms, where there are easy outlets to the sea. The time for fishing them is early in the morning or late in the afternoon, and they may be taken from May until August. In the first of the season, worms, small fish, or shrimp is the usual bait; but in July and August they are partial to the fly.

The tackle used for salmon should combine strength with imperceptibility. A large sized reel is necessary, with some two hundred yards of line made of silk and hair combined, or a grass line is sometimes used. The leader should be four or five feet long, made of twisted gut, and with a swivel sinker, or a swivel alone in fly fishing. The rod should be fifteen to eighteen feet long, and elastic at the end. The proper hook for worm and live bait is the Kirby and Limerick pattern, Nos. 0 to 4; and Nos. 0 to 3 in fly fishing. Fishing with artificial flies is often very successful, the flies being made of gray and gaudy feathers. They are sold at all the fishing tackle stores in New York.

BROOK TROUT.

Spearing the salmon is practised at night, with torches, by professional fishermen, but seldom by sportsmen or amateurs.

The Trout.

Trout, which are caught in the numerous running streams of the United States, vary in color, appearance and size with the quality of the soil pertaining to the streams they inhabit. They generally have red and yellow spots on their sides—concave tail, and belly tinged with orange red. They have large eyes, a wide mouth, sharp teeth, and scaleless skin. The usual weight of brook trout is from one to four pounds. Another species caught in New England are dotted on the back with shaded brownish spots, and the fins are tinged with yellow. The fish called "black trout," which are found in sluggish muddy streams, does not belong properly to the species. Trout will vary as much in shape and flavor, as in the color. They spawn in September and October, and the time for taking them is in the Spring and Summer. You may fish for trout until the 20th August, though the finest ones are taken in the months of May and June. They bite the best in March and April.

You can hook trout in several ways. Some prefer fly fishing, and this is the most interesting mode in Summer. The rod to be used should be light, and the line made of hair, or silk and grass.. The fly should be placed on a length of gut, or a single light

hair. Do not fish with your back to the sun. Stand as far from the stream as circumstances will allow. Always throw your line from you—never whip it out. Fly fishing is only suitable for pleasant weather. The best time of day is early in the morning or just at sunset. The line should be about half as long again as the rod. It should be thrown up stream, and let the fly gradually float down, and if possible fall into the eddies where the fish is apt to retreat in case of alarm. Let your line fall into the stream lightly and naturally, and when you raise it, do so gently and by degrees.

In trout fishing with the fly, only a small part of the line is allowed to be in the water. The end, or leader, should, as before stated, be a single light hair, if you can get one, as the trout is extremely shy and suspicious. If you stand on the bank of the stream, throw your line as far up as possible, as you cannot expect to catch a trout opposite or below where you are standing. If bushes intervene between you and the stream, (which is all the better,) do not rustle them or make a noise.

The usual length of a rod for trouting is fourteen feet, though longer or shorter ones may be used, according to fancy or convenience. The bottom of the line, unless you have a light hair, should be strong silk-worm gut. The size of the hook will depend upon your flies. Nos. 4 and 5 are used for worms and beetles, and 7 to 9 for small flies. If the flies are too small, put two on the hook, as these in-

sects frequently fall into the water in couples. The largest and best trout lie in shallow water, faced up stream, or else they lie near the surface. They are found on the South, or shady side of the stream. It is necessary to be exceedingly cautious not to show yourself, as if they see you they vanish for the day Grasshoppers and other small field insects are frequently used with success when worms fail.

Worm Fishing for trout is practiced with similar caution. After a rain, when the water of the brook is a little riley, you can catch trout by this mode—sometimes very rapidly. It is usually practiced in the spring. A single split shot will generally be enough to sink your line, unless the stream is deep and rapid. The rod should be of bamboo, 16 to 20 feet long, and the line shorter than the rod. Keep the point of your rod exactly above the bait, steadily following it, as the bait drags along the bottom. When the fish takes the bait, do not let him run with it, but keep a steady hand. Do not jerk, but play gradually with him. If the day be clear, and the stream shallow, the best way is to wade up the stream cautiously, throwing your line far up, and letting it come gradually towards you. The fish always heads up stream, and you should not fail to remember if he once sees you he he vanishes.

Bottom Fishing with blue-bottle flies is practiced as follows: Use a silk or fine hair line, with gut leader, and a small quill float. Hook No. 10 is about the proper size. You will want one or two split shot

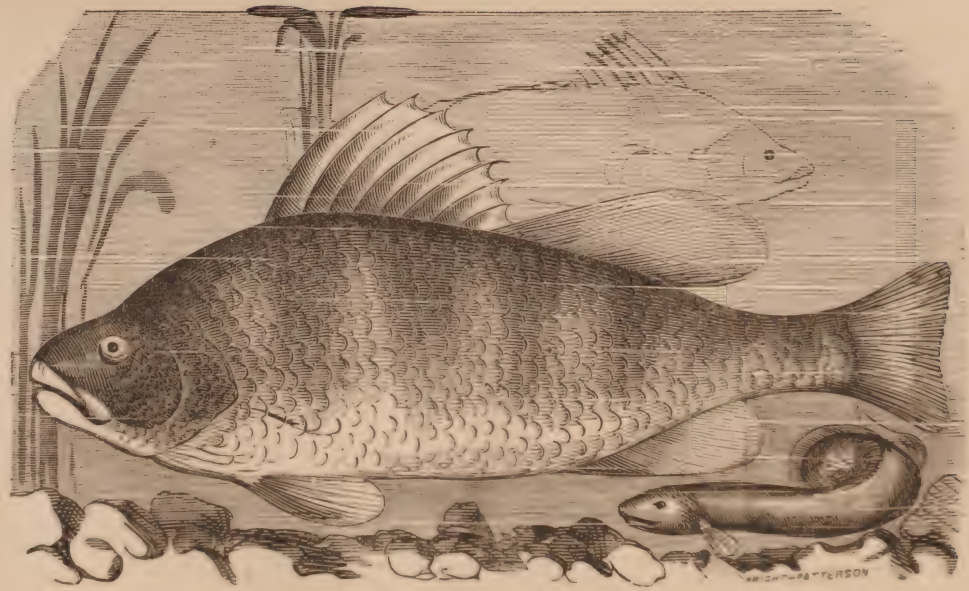
on the line. Fill a glass bottle with the common blue-bottle fly found on fresh horse or cow dung. Bait your hook with two of these flies, and let it sink nearly to the bottom. In this way you may catch trout in ponds, or deep waters deposited by running streams, and often in the slack water of mill dams, when you could not catch them in the stream itself. This kind of trout fishing is practiced in July and August. When the fish has taken the bait, play him towards the top of the water always. Do not let him tangle your line in the weeds or under-brush.

The fin of a trout, or other small fish, is sometimes used as a bait for trout with good success. It is dropped and roved, as with a minnow or fly.

Brook trouting is the very poetry of angling. It is an intellectual amusement, too, and requires as much caution calculation, and prescience as a game of chess—as fine touches of art as are necessary to perfect a picture or a statue. Through the meadow, where the rivulet, scarce a stride across, glides silently through the grass; along the gravelly bottom, where it sings and gurgles among the pebbles; through the gaps between the stony ridges, where it chafes and dances and raises its tiny roar among the splintered rocks; and across the woods, where it turns, and doubles, and feigns to sleep in quiet pools, the trouter must pursue

"The *noiseless* tenor of his way."

In every promising nook, on every inviting eddy, at the foot of every mimic cataract—in fact, in every



YELLOW PERCH.

spot where a trout would be likely to resort for fun, or food, or privacy—his fly must settle. After each deposit in his "creel," he may look around and admire the prospect, open his ears to the song of the spring birds, and sniff up the delightful odors which the world exhales in turning green. But all these things are to the trout fisher as if they were not, while he is professionally engaged; it is only in the pauses of his art that he ventures upon a parenthetical glance at the general features of the landscape. His basket filled, however, he has leisure to be sentimental, and can sit down on a fence and invoke the muses, if he happens to have the gift of jingle.

Perch.

There are four distinct specimens of this fish inhabiting American waters, viz.: the Common Perch, the Yellow Perch, the White Perch, and the Black or Red Perch. The *Common Perch* is of brown olive tinge, mingled with golden hue, and has dark bands across its sides. The first dorsal fin is larger than the second, and all the fins are tinged with a lively red when first taken from the water. Length usually from five to fifteen inches. The *Yellow Perch* averages a little larger in size, with a small head tapering towards its mouth. Its jaws contain a large number of minute teeth. Its back is of olive brown color—sides yellow, and belly white. The stripes across its sides are brown, as are also its dorsal and pectoral fins. The ventral and anal fins are

of beautiful scarlet color. The *White Perch* has double nostrils and minute teeth. Its general color is whitish, with a dark hue—pale back and white sides—eyes large and pale. Its length is usually about eight inches. *Black or Red Perch* are so called from the different appearance of the fish at different times. Just previous to the breeding season it is of a dark red tinge. After getting entirely through spawning it becomes so dark that the red nearly disappears. Its tail is slightly forked, and its jaws are set with fine sharp teeth. In the Western States this fish grows to the length of two feet, and is known as the Brown Bass. They are an excellent fish for eating and are easily taken. The perch is a bold and ravenous fish, and fears neither the pike, the bass, or any other enemies of the small fry. He is sometimes eaten by them, but very seldom, in consequence of his back fin being large and armed with bristling points.

Perch are taken at all seasons of the year, but are in the best condition for the table in April, May, June and July. They spawn in March, are very slow in growth, but multiply exceedingly fast. The best time to fish for them is in the morning before ten o'clock, and late in the afternoon. Perch being sociable fish, usually move together in numbers, and these are generally of a nearly similar size. If, therefore, you catch one in a particular hole, it is your own fault if you do not get a good string of them from the same place.

A light stiff rod, with short line, float and sinker, is all that is necessary for perch. The usual bait is the common angleworm, which they will take as soon as anything. Shad spawn is sometimes used in the shad season, and minnows in the Spring of the year. When the stream in which you are fishing runs into salt water, shrimp will be found a good bait. Hooks to be used are Limerick trout, Nos. 4 to 7, according to the size of your fish.

The *Yellow Perch*, which is very plenty in the North Western waters of the United States, attains a large growth in the Lakes—some of them weighing three pounds and more. In the streams and ponds, from half to three quarters of a pound are the common weights. They are caught there at all seasons. Expert anglers use the minnow in catching perch, and early in the season they will bite very readily at that bait. Impale the minnow alive and lively on a No. 9 trout hook—stick the hook either under the back fin or through the upper lip—use a few shots for a sinker about ten inches from the hook, and have a cork large enough to prevent the minnow from sinking it. With this arrangement you must fix your line to keep the bait about mid-water. Small live frogs are frequently used for perch with success, fixed in the same way as the minnow.

The best way to cook perch is to fry them in pork fat, first frying some salt pork in the pan. Pork fat procured in this way is superior to lard or butter in frying any kind of fish.

The Sun-fish.

This is a small yellow and brown fish, with colors similar to the yellow perch, but without the shades—fins tinged with scarlet. Its shape is broad and flat like a pumpkin seed, and in some places the fish is known by that name. They are usually from three to eight inches long—though in some streams in the Western States a kind are found which exceed a foot in length. They are caught with the angle-worm, in the same manner as the perch. They bite very rapidly, and hence ladies on pic-nic parties are particularly fond of fishing sun-fish.

Pickerel and Pike.

Pickerel are found in almost all the fresh waters of the United States. They are a sort of miniature fresh water shark, preying upon every living thing that they can master. This fish is very similar to the pickerel of Europe and other parts of the earth. It swims alone—is never seen in shoals—and its appearance in any particular locality is a signal for the sudden dispersion of the small fry. Pickerel have certain haunts, and though they usually move independent of each other, yet expert anglers will catch a considerable number. But to catch "a string of pickerel" is a good day's work. They grow very fast when they have an abundance of food, often reaching a foot in length the first year, and will double their size in two years more. They have been known as heavy as forty pounds and upwards,

PICKEREL.

though the usual fish is from three to twelve pounds. Rennie tells of a pickerel that was placed in a pond "with an abundance of other fish," and in one year it devoured the whole of them except a carp weighing nine pounds, and it had bitten a piece out of him!

Pickerel are fond of shady places, and in summer they frequent the parts of the stream nearly where the pickerel weed grows. They generally spawn in March or April, and earlier in some southern streams. In winter they get under rocks, or stumps, or into convenient deep holes, and they can be taken then with small live fish for bait. In rivers you can generally catch pickerel near the mouth of some small stream emptying into the river; the fall of the year is the best time for catching them. In the hot summer months they will seldom bite at all, except perhaps in a very windy day. In the fall, too, they are in better condition. Pickerel fishing in the spring is sometimes very successful, however, though the fish are not so good when breeding. It is a singular fact that small fish seem to be perfectly aware of the harmlessness of the pickerel in the summer, as they may often be seen sporting near where their deadly enemy lies still in the water, as if in a dreamy torpor. At this period their usual beautiful green color and bright yellow spots are dull and leaden. In the more northern waters they are sometimes taken as early as August in good condition.

The tackle used for pickerel is a pretty stiff 10 foot rod, with a reel, and some 50 or 60 yards of flax

line, which should be protected by the hook with gimp or wire. The Limerick or Kirby salmon hook is used. The size is 0 to 5, according to the size of the fish. In a running stream, the sinker and float will also be found necessary. The bait should be a small live fish, or frog, or the hind leg of a frog skinned. Worms are sometimes used in small streams, where the water is clear, and the game small. In using live bait, when the pickerel takes it, do not draw your line too quick. The bait itself, if properly impaled, will be very lively, and will be apt to make a violent effort to escape its enemy. Inexperienced anglers may take this movement for a veritable bite; but when the bite comes, there is no mistaking it. In impaling a small fish for bait, pass the hook under the back fin, just under the roots of its rays. This will not disable the fish, and it will appear lively in the water. When using live frog bait, you pass the hook through the skin of the back or belly, or the back muscle of the hind legs. The live frog is generally used on the top of the water—if not, you should let him rise occasionally to take the air. When the pickerel has seized your bait, give him plenty of time to swallow it, and also plenty of line. Sometimes he will hold it in his mouth and play with it before gorging. On bringing him to land, be careful of his jaws, for he has a set of teeth, sharp as needles.

Trolling for pickerel is decidedly an exciting and interesting sport if you have good and large game.

A small sail boat, or skiff is used, with an attendant to manage the boat as you direct. You can use the live bait, or an artificial bait, as is most convenient. Some sportsmen are very fortunate with the artificial bait. A stiff rod and reel, with the same tackle as before described, and no sinker—is all that is requisite. The boat should move gently, and let your line drag far in the rear. With artificial bait the fish is hooked almost instantly. If you use live bait, be exceedingly careful in determining when the fish has gorged it. You should give him several minutes after he has seized it, for this purpose. On seeing the bait, a pickerel will generally run off with it, and will then stop to gorge it, but does not always do so. The sign that he has swallowed it is a peculiar slackening of the line, which experienced anglers can easily understand. But if he has gorged the bait, he will soon start off a second time, and sometimes will stop and start off the third time. In these cases you should never be in a hurry. When you are convinced that he has taken down the bait, draw a tight line, and strike for your fish. If he is large you should play with him until he is quite exhausted, or you may lose him in the attempt to land. The difficulty of taking a pickerel from the hook may be obviated in a measure by gagging. For this porpose some anglers provide themselves with prepared sticks, of various lengths. If the book is completely swallowed, as is frequently the case, open the stomach in the middle, cut away the hook, and unslipping the

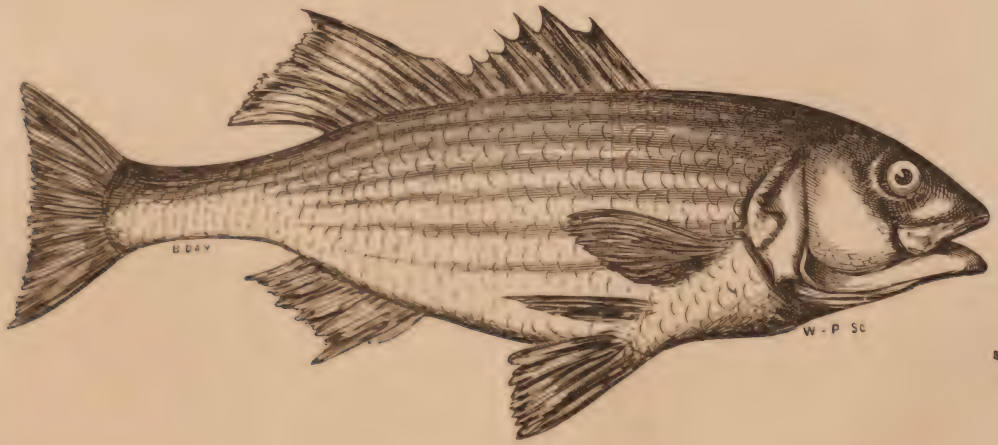
knot that holds the gimp, draw it out that way rather than through the mouth.

In the Mississippi and Ohio rivers there are several species of this fish, but they all resemble the pickerel of other waters in a greater or less degree. They are of all sizes from half a pound up to twenty pounds weight.

The Striped Bass.

This excellent fish is found all along the Atlantic coast, from Florida to Maine. It inhabits the rivers, bays, inlets and creeks; and is taken in great abundance, particularly in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. There, it frequently grows to the length of three, four, and even five feet, and weighing, in some instances, full one hundred pounds! The striped bass will run up some rivers a hundred miles or more, and in Maine they are found quite plentiful in the Penobscot. In the Connecticut, too, some very fine ones are taken. In winter they still keep their haunts, and do not go into deep water like other fish of similar habits. The word (bass) is said to be a Dutch name, signifying perch; but it little resembles the fish we know by that name. The bass is one of the most beautiful fish in point of color and perfect symetry that swims, and next to the salmon is the most delicious for the table.

In the spring of the year the striped bass runs up the rivers and into other fresh water places to spawn —and then again late in the fall to shelter. The



STRIPED BASS.

fall run is the best. It can be taken, however, nearly all the year round, and of all sizes.

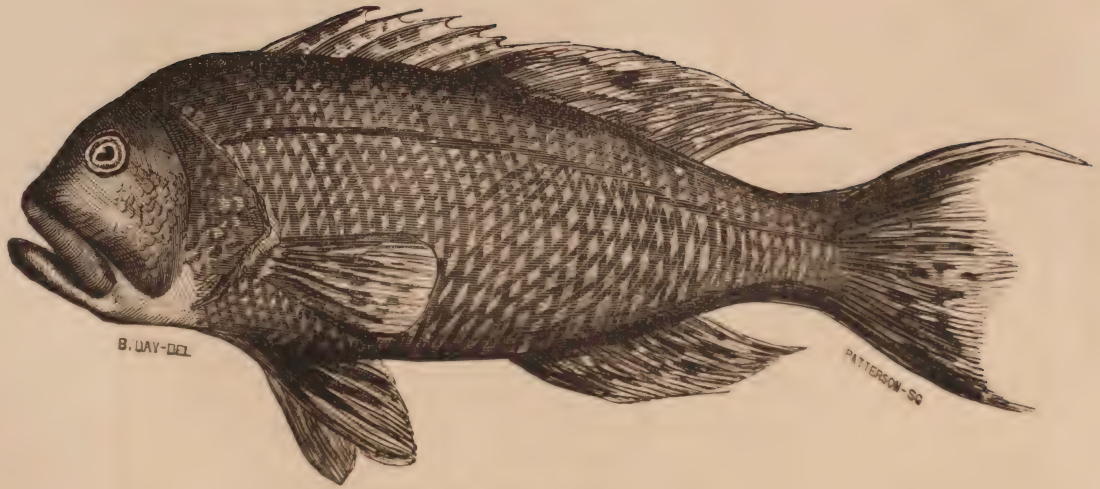
The apparatus for bass fishing is a pliable rod from 12 to 18 feet in length, according to circumstances. The reel should have 200 to 300 feet of line, which may be made of flax or grass. Silk line is sometimes used. The swivel sinker and float should be gaged according to your ground. The leader should be three or four feet in length, with a Limerick or Kirby hook from 0 to 3, according to the size of the fish to be taken. Double leaders are often necessary. Use your own judgment in this respect. In boat-fishing, the float is not usually used, and the sinker should be light enough to float off with the tide, but at the same time to touch bottom at all times. By this mode you will get large fish, as the large ones are generally nearest the bottom.

The best place for fishing bass is the quietest place you can find, and at full neap tide. When this tide occurs early in the morning, or late in the afternoon, and if the wind is off shore and a gentle ripple on the water you may take bass very easily, and in abundance. In rivers, get in the exact channel, or over some deep cove, near an outlet of a brook, or some small stream.

In the waters near New York City, the striped bass begins to bite well early in April. At this season shrimp is the best bait, especially in salt water. In fresh water they will bite shad roe at this season. In June you must begin to use soft shell crabs,

though they will usually bite at shrimp until about the first of August. The mode of fishing with crabs differs a little from the other, inasmuch as the bait should now lie on the bottom, whereas in the case of shrimps it is suspended near the bottom. A sliding sinker is now used, and the float dispensed with altogether. About the first of October you again resort to shrimps, as the shell of the crab now begins to harden. The Killey fish is also used now, in salt water, which is, in fact, preferable to the shrimp for large fish. In fresh water you should use the white opened soft clam. But the bass is very whimsical and dainty. In some places he will jump greedily at a clam bait, while at others he will take nothing but shrimp or crab. There is a beautiful little fish called the spearing which is fished with at certain places in salt water, with great success. In the Hudson river, the largest and finest bass are taken with set lines, as follows: Two stakes are driven in the bottom of the river at a certain distance apart, and a strong cord is stretched across. To this cord is attached short lines at convenient distances, with strong hooks, bated with tom-cod or other small fish. In this way the very largest bass are taken in great abundance.

Trolling for bass is excellent sport, and is practiced a good deal by amateurs. The tackle employed is a strong hand line, and artificial bait is used with good success. This consists of silver plated "spoons," or bits of mother pearl worked into a proper shape,



SEA BASS.

and other ingenious contrivances to be had at the fishing-tackle stores. Squid are also an excellent bait for trolling. To fasten the squid to your hook, you should use a needle and waxed linen thread. Take off the skin of the squid, and pull out the spine—then insert the needle through the opening made by the spine, and in this way fasten your hook so the point will pass through near his eye—commence sewing him onto the hook from his tail, and stitch up to his neck. This is so troublesome a process that few sportsmen use it; but very large fish are taken in this manner.

The Oswego Bass, and Black Bass.

There are two distinct species of the black bass, which are so near alike that it is hard to distinguish one from the other, unless they are together. The observable difference then is, that the Oswego bass has a more forked tail, is thicker at the shoulder, has coarser scales and larger mouth. This latter fish is found in great abundance in Lake Ontario and particularly at the mouth of Oswego river, which gives him his name. He also frequents other streams which flow into Ontario. The black bass is abundant in Lake Erie, and a few of them have found their way into Ontario, probably by way of the canal, as it is not supposed that any one could survive the fearful descent of Niagara Falls. These two fish are alike in their habits and peculiarities. A third species of black bass in Lake Huron, grows

larger than the Oswego species, which seldom exceed fifteen or sixteen inches in length, but is chubby-shaped, being five inches broad, and two or more in thickness. The black color of this fish extends the whole length of the back and sides, growing lighter as it comes towards the belly, and in some cases of a yellowish and sometimes of a greenish hue. It generally feeds on small fish, which it takes in head-foremost, and it is this habit that enables the angler to hook them easily. It will bite, at certain seasons, at lobster, and muscles; and a peculiar artificial fly is also used, at times, with success.

This fish begins to bite at Tonnawanda in the latter part of May, and at Oswego early in June, and at about the same time in the more western lakes. They continue to afford good sport for a couple of months, the time for fishing them being early in the morning and after four in the afternoon. In August they are spawning, and will not usually bite at all, and if caught are poor affairs. In September and October they may be taken again, and some fine ones are caught in the latter month.

The tackle used for fishing black bass is similar to that described for striped bass, viz.: a stout pliable rod, with reel, and some two hundred feet or more of flax or grass line, with a gut leader four or five feet in length, and a Limerick or Kirby hook. For bait, live minnows are the best for large fish. Fix your hook through the eyes of the minnow with extreme care not to touch the brain, and he will swim

almost as lively as ever. In some parts of Michigan small sun-fish are used as follows: After running the hook through the end of the nose of the small fish, conceal its point with an angle-worm. On being thrown into the water, other sun-fish will throng round the captive, being attracted by the worm. The bass darts suddenly among them, and while those that are free escape to shallow water, the bait is seized by the head, and the bass is thus easily hooked. After hooking your bass, it is not always that you catch him. Indeed he is the most uneasy fish imaginable to be hauled out of the water, and his vigorous and pertinacious struggles for liberty make the sport of fishing him excellent. After being hooked, the bass will often rise to the surface and leap into the air, shaking himself violently to dislodge the hook. At other times he will turn suddenly towards the angler, slacking the line, and in this way detaching himself from the hook by floundering about. It is, therefore, necessary to be careful to keep your line taut by means of the reel; and with proper care and expertness in this respect you will land your fish. A large artificial fly of gay appearance, is also an excellent bait, and next to the live minnow. You can usually get the fly at a fishing-tackle store, or if you make it yourself, the body should be of peacock feather, and scarlet wings tipped with white pigeon feathers. The scarlet is what attracts the fish, and be sure to put that on your fly. Small frogs and craw-fish are sometimes used for bait; and

in May, in the rivers, they will bite angle-worms. The bait, in all cases, should be kept in motion, as in that way it attracts the attention of the bass, and he darts at it very suddenly.

Trolling for black bass is excellent sport, and six pounders are sometimes caught in this way. You may use the spoon with good success, or a few white feathers with scarlet cloth fixed up to imitate a gray insect will answer. In Lake George, trolling is the favorite sport, and the bass caught are usually from one to four and a half pounds weight.

In Niagara river, near its confluence with Lake Erie, both black bass and perch are taken in the summer season in untold thousands with the hook and line, both by professional fisherman and amateurs. Trolling is the favorite scientific way of catching them. You take a light, clinker-built boat of some twelve or fifeen feet long, at Buffalo or Black River, enter the river a mile below, go down the current three miles to opposite the head of Grand Island, then bait and throw out your hooks, slowly drift down the river near the island shore, and by the time you reach Falconwood, if it is a good day and you are an expert angler, you draw up half a dozen to twenty beautiful bottle-green victims, giving you all the play to land them securely in your boat that the most ardent Waltonian would desire. They are from two to four pounds in weight, fat as a clam, and delicious as the shad or the tautog. This is the very poetry of bass-fishing.

The Red-fish or Spotted Bass.

This is a Southern fish, being caught in nearly all the inlets of the Atlantic below Baltimore, and in those of the Northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico. At these latter points he is called the red-fish, because, in death, he changes to variegated reddish colors. His color, in life, is light silvery, and near the tail is usually one dark spot, which looks unnatural, and as though it came there by accident. Some of them have three or four of these dark spots in a cluster. When taken as far North as Charleston, he is called the spotted bass, a name derived from these spots on the tail. In North and South Carolina, he begins to bite in March, and is then fished for all through the rest of the year, and sometimes in January. In the Gulf of Mexico you can get red-fish the year round. He runs in shallow water, and at the extreme South is taken with a small sized cod-hook, and shrimp bait, or pieces of mullet will sometimes answer. With a rod and reel, you may follow the directions given for weak-fish or striped bass, using No. 00 Limerick or Kirby hooks, and twisted gut leaders.

The Mackinaw Trout, or Salmon Trout.

This is a fish of excellent flavor, and some people consider it fully equal to salmon. The flesh is reddish, and hence it is often called the salmon trout. The color is dark or dusky grey, back and sides sprinkled with spots somewhat lighter, belly light

brown or cream color—the teeth, gums, and roof of the mouth having a bright purple tinge. It is a large fish, usually averaging from two to five feet in length, and inhabits all the great lakes in the West, as well as the smaller lakes in the Northern part of the State of New York. It is entirely different from the common lake trout, so abundant in some of the Western lakes.

Sportsmen always take the salmon trout by trolling, or by set lines. For the latter they use the largest sized cod-hooks and cod-lines, and for bait, bits of lake herring or white fish are all that is necessary. In trolling, both tackle and bait are different, the minnow being chiefly used for bait. If you use a rod it should be a stout one with a hollow butt, and an extra top, which could be replaced in case of breakage. The line should be of a length adapted to the ground—firmly made of cotton or strong flax —and your leader should be of twisted gut a yard or more in length. A No. 1 Limerick salmon hook is generally used, with live bait, and No. 3 or 4 hook in fly fishing. A light swivel sinker is necessary when the fish run in deep water. In trolling use swivels freely to keep your line from getting tangled. When you have a bite, slack the line a little to allow the fish to gorge his bait, then begin to pull steadily, after arranging everything in a proper manner to enable you to play your fish. A gaff is generally used for securing the fish after he is brought to the surface. In fly fishing the largest and most gaudy sal-

mon flies are generally chosen, attached to No. 3 or No. 4 salmon hooks. Trolling for salmon trout is most excellent sport, and amateurs sometimes spend a whole month at a time in the wilds of Northern New York in pursuing it.

There is a new method for fishing the salmon trout, by using what is called a train of hooks, being a row of hooks fastened on a large round piece of gut, about an inch apart. Three or four hooks are generally used, though some sportsmen use six seven. They should be hooked in different parts of bait, one in the mouth, one in the tail, and others in tough parts of the shiner. The size of the hooks used are No. 5, Limerick salmon, or No. 1 trout. The mouth hook is on a loop, so it can be moved and adapted to any length of bait. The tail hook is fastened on the end of the gut. To ensure success you should have an experienced hand to row your boat in trolling for this fish. The necessary tackle can generally be procurred at the tackle stores, as it is a favorite and delightful amusement for amateurs.

The Black Trout.

This is a fish rather coarse in flesh; but in outward appearance it resembles the black bass of the Northern lakes. His back is very dark, and the sides gradually grow lighter around to his belly, which is white. He has a large head and mouth, with projecting under jaw. He is found only in Southern waters, and may be taken in most of the streams in

the Southern states. One peculiarity of this fish, entirely different from the black bass, is that they meditate, at times, near the surface of the water, getting near logs or lilly-pads, so they can dive out of the way at the least alarm. In this position they are baited with success with a small fish called the horny head. The ordinary tackle used for the black trout is similar to bass tackle, viz.: a pliable rod eight or ten feet long, with a silk, grass or flax line, and reel —Kirby hook No. 2, or Limerick No. 1, attached to strong gut leaders. For bait, the minnow, and the Killey fish, or the roach is better when you can get it. He will not bite at all unless the water is clear. Artificial bait is often used in taking the black trout, as follows—a fancy fly made in red and white colors, either feathers or flannel, and fixed on a Limerick salmon hook No. 3 or 4. This should be attached to a long line; and with a light reed pole, the sportsman should whip it along on the water, when the fish will dart at it and get hooked. The time for fishing the black trout is from April until June, and from September down to winter weather. They spawn in July and August, and do not bite at all in those months.

The Cat-fish.

This is a fresh water bottom fish found in streams and ponds all over the United States. There are several kinds of them, which vary in size from a couple of inches in length up to those monsters of

CAT-FISH.

the same species which inhabit the mud banks of the Mississippi river, and the great Western lakes. The common cat-fish is of a dusky color on the back, which gradually lightens towards the belly, the belly itself being of a light greyish hue. The sides of the head are greenish, and some species of them have small prickly horns. They are taken in great abundance, and their size varies with the size of the stream, or the richness of their feeding ground. In good situations in large rivers they weigh from one to four pounds. In the Mississippi, and the lakes of Northern New York, they grow to twenty, thirty, fifty, and even one hundred pounds. It is an easy matter to catch cat-fish. You have only to procure tackle strong enough to draw them out of the water, using a hook according to the expected size of your game. A single or double gut leader is necessary, according to the strength required. Minnows, pieces of fish, shad-roe, worms, toasted cheese, insects, pieces of meat or liver, chickens offal—any of these baits will attract the cat-fish. You can fish with hand lines, or with a rod, as you may prefer. The proper hook is the Limerick salmon from No. 1 to 5, according to the size of your fish. They do not bite very vigorously, but perform a series of fine nibbles, similar to the bite of an eel. The cat-fish is an excellent pan fish when properly cooked. In St. Louis the large ones are sold in market like our large sea-fish, being cut up in steaks of the size desired by the purchaser. They are plentiful always in mud bot-

toms, above mill-dams, and in coves of the river. The large ones are often taken by trolling with artificial squid or fly. The time for fishing cat-fish begins in April, and lasts until cold weather.

The Hake.

This is an Irish salt water fish, similar in appearance to the tom cod. In Galway bay, and other sea inlets of Ireland, the hake is exceedingly abundant, and is taken in great numbers. It is also found in England, and France. Since the Irish immigration to America, the hake has followed in the wake of their masters, as it is now found in New York bay, in the waters around Boston, and off Cape Cod. Here it is called the stock-fish, and the Bostonians call them poor Johns. [Poor Pats would be more appropriate.] It is a singular fact that until within a few years this fish was never seen in America. It does not grow so large here as in Europe, though here they are from ten to eighteen inches in length. They are fished for by day or by night, and bite the most readily when the tide is running strong, either out or in. The tackle used is similar to that described for black fish, the hook being No. 4 Limerick salmon. Shrimp, clams or crabs—either of them is good bait. The general color of this fish is a reddish brown, with some golden tints—the sides being of a pink silvery lustre. It is exceedingly voracious, and affords considerable sport in fishing, though our sportsmen seldom go in pursuit of it.

The Sea Bass and Porgy.

These salt water fish are caught in immense quantities in the vicinity of New York bay on what are called the Fishing Banks. In the summer months, which is the time for fishing them, steamboats are daily leaving New York to accommodate fishing parties. The tackle used is a hand line of flax or hemp twelve to eighteen fathoms long, with several hooks attached, ten to fifteen inches apart. The hooks for the porgy should be the black fish hook No. 3, and for sea bass, the Kirby pattern, No. 1. Provide yourself with a goodly number of hooks, as you are apt to lose them in various ways. You should have a lead sinker weighing three quarters of a pound or more. Clam bait is the only kind necessary, and if you salt it a little it will be tougher and stick better to the hook. You should watch your lines cautiously, and jerk them strongly at each bite to hook your fish, or you may lose your bait. The fish thus taken average from one to four and a half pounds, and it frequently happens that two or three are drawn out of the water together. You will thus see the necessity of having very strong tools, and also of wearing an old pair of leather gloves to preserve your hands from blistering while drawing up your fish.

The White Bass.

This is a very fine fish, somewhat resembling the white perch, though larger. It is found in the lakes of Northern New York, and also in some of the

more Western lakes. Its back is dark, with white sides and belly, and with narrow darkish stripes running lengthwise on the sides. The size of this fish is from 10 to 15 inches, and it usually weighs from one to four pounds, though larger ones are sometimes taken. The striped bass tackle is used in fishing it, but it a very skittish fish, and to catch it requires a good deal of tact and caution. If you succeed in finding a good ground, however, you may have excellent luck, as this fish moves in schools, and when not frightened, will bite readily at the live minnow. The season for fishing them is in May and June, and in the fall months after the middle of September. They are exceedingly lively on the hook, and afford a good deal of sport.

The White or Silver Perch.

This fish is very plentiful in the Harlem river, New York city, and is also taken in some of the Long Island ponds, as well as in the Hudson river, in the Schuylkill, and in many of the streams of Connecticut. It probably frequents other soft water streams and lakes, though we are not well enough acquainted with its haunts to give any definite information. It moves in schools, and when in the mood will dart at the bait in the liveliest manner, sometimes springing entirely out of the water when seeing it. The tackle to be used for this fish is about the same as that used for the yellow perch, and the bait is the small minnow, or the Killy, or shiner, though

worms are sometimes used. The hooks should be Nos. 1 to 3 trout. They bite most readily early in the morning in shallow water near the shore, but are often taken at mid-day on bars near to deep water. At sundown the white perch may be found on the sunny side of the stream, or lake, and will then bite with the same eagerness as in the morning. His bite is different from that of the ordinary yellow perch, as when he gets hold of the bait he drags the float under and keeps it there. When fishing from a boat, the best way is to drift along down the stream, throwing your hook in every nook and corner; and where you once get a bite, anchor your boat, and fish as long as you have luck. You may be quite as fortunate by rowing up the stream and trying the same process over again. This fish always prefers sunshine to shade.

The Smelt.

In the United States this fish seldom exceeds ten inches in length, and the usual size is from five to eight inches. In South America they grow to the length of two feet, are semi-transparent, and are most delicious eating. Some of them caught by American sailors at the Straits of Magellan were thirty inches long by eight inches round the body. The smelt is exceedingly plentiful in the waters around Boston, and they are also taken in the rivers of New Jersey and the ponds of Long Island. They are of a pale green color on the back, with silvery

sides, and a satin band running along the sides. They may be called a sea fish, though they run up fresh water streams in the spring to spawn. They are caught in October and November, and in the winter months by breaking holes in the ice. The tackle used for the smelt is a silk, or silk and hair line, with Limerick trout hooks Nos. 2 to 5, on single gut leaders. The sinker should be pretty heavy to overcome the tide. Shrimp bait is generally used, or small pieces of minnow or frog will answer. If you wish to fish them through a hole in the ice, take a piece of small brass wire a foot and a half long, put it through a piece of lead for a sinker, and fasten your hooks at both ends. Tie on a cotton or flax line and then drop your hooks. You can use three or four of these lines at different holes, setting them, while you are either skating or running round to keep warm. In this way you will get a fine string of smelts in a short time. Smelts will live, breed and thrive when transferred to fresh water ponds; and by some people these fresh water smelt are considered the best eating. They live a long time out of water, and hence are good eating after being carried long distances.

The Yellow Pike Perch.

The color and appearance of this fish show it to be a true perch, though its form and habits are like the pike, or pickerel. Its back is of a yellowish olive, the sides lighter, but mottled with black, the

belly white, and the head of a brownish color, mottled with green. This fish is taken in great abundance in some of the Western lakes and rivers, including the Susquehanna and its tributary streams, and in the valley of the Mohawk is called the Mohawk pike. He is exceedingly voracious, and with proper tackle and bait is easily caught. A bass rod and tackle is the proper one, with Limerick salmon hook Nos. 4 or 5. The bait should be a live minnow or shiner. The size of the fish varies from ten to twelve inches in length, weighing from two or three pounds to ten, twelve and even twenty pounds. In rivers they frequent the neighborhood of swift running water, and in lakes they are found in deep holes, and under weeds, stumps, &c. The yellow pike is an excellent table fish, and highly prized at the West, where they are caught in great abundance. It spawns in April and May.

The Chub.

This fish is not very common, and being exceedingly timid and scary, is seldom taken except by experienced anglers. He is found in the streams and ponds of Western Massachusetts, in Otsego Lake, N. Y., the Passaic river, N. J., and in some parts of Pennsylvania. He conceals himself in deep holes, under projecting ledges of rocks, roots of trees, &c., and to fish for him successfully, it is necessary to get a position near some such place as one of these. The chub has a large head, greenish back, silvery sides,

white belly, and fins tinged with yellowish red. His length is usually from five to nine or ten inches, though in some places he grows larger. The tools used in fishing him are the usual trout tackle and rod, baited with the common angle worm in the spring, or grasshoppers in summer. They are also taken in summer with the different artificial flies made for trout. In spring and fall they bite at worms only. In winter they are taken in lakes and ponds by making a hole in the ice, and baiting with cheese, for the want of worms.

The Sucker.

There are a great many different species of the sucker, and some of them will not bite or nibble at any bait whatever. He is usually a white silvery fish with dark spine, and a peculiar puckery mouth. He goes by various names in different parts of the country, and frequents almost every stream and lake, large or small, throughout the Union. The kind that does not bite is sometimes taken with wire slip-noose, but as that is not legitimate sport, we do not deem it necessary to particularize the manner. The regular trout tackle and hooks are used in fishing the sucker everywhere, and worms are the proper bait, though he will bite at shad-roe in the spring season. There is a kind of black sucker, taken in Lake Erie, which goes by the name of the shoemaker. A red-tail sucker in some of the Western rivers is called the red-horse. A long species of sucker in the Ohio

river is called the carp—an excellent fish, and which affords a good deal of sport. In the Delaware river the sucker has larger scales than those caught elsewhere. As a general thing the sucker is not esteemed highly as a table fish, nor is there usually much sport in fishing them. They suck in the bait, and thus nibble at the hook. They are not very lively when pulled up, and unless cooked immediately their flesh grows soft.

Buffalo Carp, or Perch.

This is an inhabitant of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio rivers, and is also found in some of the other large rivers of the West. He resembles the salt water porgy in appearance, though in reality more plump and round. He is of a smutty silvery color, and usually varies in size from ten to fifty inches in length, though in the Mississippi he grows larger. He is easily taken, and the tackle required is a strong flax or hemp line, with a stout bent hook of the size Nos. 1 or 2 salmon. The sinker should be heavy enough to carry your bait to the bottom. The bait used for the Buffalo carp is soft cheese. To fasten it properly to your hook, you must work it up with common cotton batting, or raw cotton. He is easily caught, and is extensively sold in the market in western river towns, being a very good table fish.

Why this fish is called a perch, we are unable to trace, or to ascertain, as it has not the least resemblance to any other individual of the perch family.

The Weak-fish, or Wheat Fish.

This is a sea-fish found only in Northern waters, chiefly those of New York and Massachusetts. The head and back is of dark brown color, with a greenish tinge. The sides are of a faint silvery hue, with dusky specks, and the belly is white. Some people suppose the name (weak-fish) to have originated in the apathy of the fish after being hooked, but this is not so, for he frequently makes the most determined and energetic struggles to escape. It is either a perversion of *wheat*-fish—which name originated in the fact that harvest time is the period to fish them, or else in the peculiar weakness of the muscles of his mouth. He is usually handsome looking, and is excellent eating, but his flesh is softer than that of some of the best of our pan-fish, which is an objection. The common size of this fish is twelve to fifteen inches in length, though in some instances he grows larger. His feeding ground is the same as the striped bass in salt water, and they are often caught with the bass; but the weak-fish never goes into fresh water. An angler for bass, if not successful, has only to arrange his tackle, and drop his line a little deeper to catch this fish.

The bait used for weak-fish is the shedder-crab and the shrimp, and sometimes he will bite freely at a clam bait. You should fish them at evening tide, when the tide is pretty well in, two hours before sunset. A large No. 1 light Kirby hook, or a slightly curbed Limerick, are the kind used. Tackle similar

to that used for bass. Weak-fish are taken very easily, and in great abundance in New York bay, and the water adjacent. Also in the inlets of New Jersey, and in those of Massachusetts.

The Muskellunge, or Lake Pike.

This inhabitant of the St. Lawrence, and the Northern and Western lakes, grows from one to three feet in length, according to the breadth of water that he is found in. Built like a pike, he is of a deep greenish brown color, dark back, and pale sides spotted with greenish spots. In fishing for the smaller sizes, your tackle should be similar to that used for pickerel; but for large ones you want a good sized cod line, with a cod hook to match. He will bite greedily at various baits—a bit of fish, a slice of pork, a bundle of worms, or chicken offal, a small fish, or a frog, &c. It requires a good deal of care, caution and physical exertion to land him. He is a beautiful game fish, and is the best eating fish, next to the salmon trout, that inhabits the lakes.

The muskellunge (long-face of the French) is a noble fish. He is an enormous pike, with the lower projecting jaw armed with needle teeth clear into the throat, ranging from five to forty pounds weight, agile as lightning, and a perfect water tiger among the smaller fishes. No more beautiful fish to look upon than he, nor one so destructive to the finny tribes, cleaves the water. The Niagara river abounds in them—or rather they are plentier in the Niagara

than in any other water we wot of. They are caught here chiefly with the seine, but occasionally with the hook, in trolling; and when you do get fairly hold of a twenty-pounder, look out! Ten to one—unless you are a thorough expert, and give him a long play, wearying him out, and foiling his prodigious efforts at escape, with your gaff-hook or dip-net at hand—he snaps your line, or breaks your hook and escapes forever! This fish is an acrobat for feats of agility. He no sooner feels the barbed steel in his gullet, than he commences a series of writhings and contortions that would astonish an "India-rubber man." He makes a semi-circle of himself, and then springs back to a "normal" position as suddenly as a tense bow when the string is cut. He zig-zags horizontally, darts upwards, darts downwards, spins round, turns somersaults, and finally, if all these dodges fail, launches his lithe body, with a quiver, six feet into the air, and coming down head foremost, darts off at a right angle like a streak of lightning. If this last manœuvre does not break the tackle, the muskellunge gives in, and suffers himself to be lifted out of the water without betraying the slightest emotion. But for all that, in dislodging the hook from his mouth, look out for the *cheraux de frise* that guards the entrance—the spikes are sharp. A sharp customer is your muskellunge, but a more delicate fish—flesh white as snow, and savory as an oyster, well boiled, and served upon the dinner-table with proper sauces—does not exist.

Trolling for Blue Fish.

The blue-fish is taken exclusively in salt water, and only through the three summer months, at which time he comes in from the sea. They are generally fished by trolling, though in some places on Long Island, experienced fishermen take them with a rod on shore. The tackle is very easily prepared, and costs but little, and the fish bite readily and are caught without much trouble. A sail boat is necessary, and if you want good sport, you should procure a guide who knows the ground where the blues delight to congregate. A large size cotton line is used, and it should be very strong, and 100 to 150 feet in length. An artificial squid made of bone, mother-of-pearl, or metal, is the tempting bait. It should be four inches long, of flat oval shape, and should have a good sized Kirby hook on the end. The size No. 0000 is about right. The hook must be so placed that its point is on a range with the flat side of the squid. Let the boat be sailed some four or five miles an hour, and should you be able to discover the exact position of the school, (they usually go in schools,) you must cross and re-cross the spot constantly, as the fish will not generally be moving about. When a fish is struck, the line should be pulled in steadily—do not jerk it, or let it slack, or you may lose your fish. On getting the fish in hand, you can easily shake him off the hook by holding your squid with the hook uppermost. Always haul in your line when tacking the boat, or you may lose

your squid in the grass at the bottom. The grounds for blue-fish in the vicinity of New York city are in Fire Island Inlet, South Bay, opposite Babylon and Islip, Long Island, and also in Pine Neck Inlet, opposite Quogue, at the East end of Long Island. Shrewsbury Inlet is also a good place for fishing the blue-fish.

The down-east fishermen use the common pewter spoon, in trolling for blue-fish, which they call a jig. It is used in the same manner as the squid before described. In pulling in the blue-fish, you must not let your line slacken in the least, and you should lift him into the boat the moment he gets alongside. Sportsmen who neglect this precaution will lose full half their fish by their disengaging themselves from the hook.

The blue-fish is singularly erratic in its habits. A century ago it was plentiful on our coast, and was held in high estimation as an article of food. During the last half of the last century and earlier years of this, it disappeared entirely. Within forty years it has returned, first appearing on the coast south of Cape Cod, near Natucket, New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard. In course of time it made its way into Massachusetts Bay, and appears to be gradually working to the northward. They have passed Cape Ann within a year or two, though not in great numbers, and a few have been seen as far north as the Isle of Shoals, off Portsmouth. They are very plentiful off Montauk Point, Long Island.

The blue-fish belongs to the mackerel family. The upper part of his body is of a bluish color, whence his name; the lower part of the sides and the belly are whitish or silvery.

The Pollock.

This is a salt water fish of beautiful appearance and singularly elegant shape. It is taken all along the Northern Atlantic coast, from Long Island to Newfoundland. From its agility and fine form, the Bay of Fundy fishermen often call it the "sea-salmon." It has a strongly-defined silvery line running down the sides. Above the lateral line the color is a greenish black. The belly is white. The time for fishing it is in the spring and fall. Jeffries Ledge, which lies fifteen or sixteen miles east by north of Cape Ann, is a favorite fishing ground for pollock, and immense quantities are taken there in the fall of the year. Formerly the fish was very little prized, was hardly ever eaten fresh, and was so carelessly cured that it had a low reputation in the market. Within a quarter of a century it has come into use, and is a favorite article, particularly when salted and dried. The pollock grows to the size sometimes of thirty pounds, but the average weight of those taken in deep water is ten pounds. In shallow water, the weight varies from a pound and a half upwards. The tackle used for black-fish is the kind wanted for fishing pollock, the hooks and lines varying with the depth of water.

The Cunner, or Sea Perch.

The cunner, or nipper (so called from their nipping bite) is a sea fish found all along the Atlantic coast, from Delaware Bay to Newfoundland. They are caught most plentifully near rocky shores, and are supposed to feed chiefly on crustacea. They are very annoying to the fisher for tautog or rock cod, as they swarm plentifully and take off with great readiness the bait intended for larger prey. They make, however, an excellent and favorite pan fish, and there are two or three old fishermen at Swampscott who devote themselves entirely to catching cunners in the cunner season, that is, from the middle of June to the middle of September, and selling them in the Boston market. They are from five inches to two feet in length, and in color no two are exactly alike. The general color is black mixed with brown, with faint transverse bars of an uncertain dusky hue. Large ones sometimes show a light orange tint throughout the whole body, with the head and gill-cover of a chocolate color mixed with light blue, and with blue fins. I have seen specimens thirteen inches in length, weighing a pound, so black as to be hardly distinguishable at the first glance from the tautog or black-fish, while others, equally large, were throughout of a vivid light yellow, varied with spots and bars of shades of the same color. They are fished for with the usual black-fish tackle, and clam bait. In fact they will bite at any bait used in fishing sea fish.

The King-fish or Barb.

This is a salt water fish sixteen or eighteen inches in length, and weighing from one to two pounds. His haunts are very uncertain, and habits little known. In color he is of a bluish light brown, with a silvery gloss, and covered with spots darker than the general color. He is thick and stout about the throax, and gradually slopes towards the tail. He is found in places similar to those frequented by the bass, weak-fish, &c., and the tackle used in fishing him is about the same, except the hook, which should be smaller, say a Limerick or Kirby salmon hook No. 4. He is probably the best sporting fish to be caught in salt water, being so lively and determined when on the hook. The summer months is the time for fishing the barb, and the bait used is the shedder crab. Do not use too large a hook, as his mouth is small. He runs deeper than either the bass or the weak-fish.

The Eel.

Every kind of eel is spawned in salt water, and the young ones generally begin to run up the fresh water streams as early as April, though when spring is backward they do not start until May. The young eel, when he begins his journey, is about the size of a sadler's needle, and the way he works himself up over the cascades and mill-dams is very curious. He exhausts the atmosphere under his body, then lifting his tail, which is flat, over his head, repeats the operation, and raises his head another lift, and so on. In

this way they ascend waterfalls and swift streams with great ease. The ground which they select for a rendezvous is still deep water, with a soft bottom. There are two kinds of the eel which frequent fresh water streams and ponds. The best and handsomest has a small head, with a tapering mouth—a beautiful white belly, and is pretty thick and fat in the middle in proportion to his size. This, in Connecticut river, is called the silver eel. Their flesh is light and of delicious flavor, unlike the flesh of the other kind, and when full grown are from two to three feet long. The other description of eel to which we have alluded has a large mouth, with the under jaw extending beyond the upper. His head is larger, and his tail broader and flatter, his belly of yellowish tinge, and his flesh of a bluish color, which requires a good deal of cooking to make it palatable. This kind is the most plentiful, and frequents stagnant muddy bottoms, while the "silver" species, though they like soft bottoms, yet prefer to be near running water. The eel breeds in the latter end of winter, and in no case does he deposite his spawn in ponds, lakes, or rivers.

In angling for eels, you use a flax line, which should be protected near the hook with gimp or wire. The eel hook is used, of a size according to the expected size of your fish. The line should be of a length suited to the depth of the water, with sinker attached, and almost any pole of convenient heft will answer. If you are fishing in fresh water, common

angle-worms are good bait, though they will bite readily at shad-roe, pieces of fish, or at frogs, entrails of chickens, &c. In salt water, clams, bits of fish, shrimp, &c., are used. They are taken in salt water without a hook, as follows: Take some white horse hairs and work them into a kind of bag, which is filled with shad-roe or soft crab. In swallowing this bait the eel will entangle the horse-hairs in his teeth, and may be landed before he can get clear of them.

Bobbing for eels is done as follows: The bob is made by stringing a lot of angle-worms on a strong thread (stout worsted yarn or linen thread is the best) and winding the string into a ball on the end of your line, which is sunk by an appropriate sinker to the bottom. The eels will fasten themselves on this bait, and you can then carefully and slowly pull up the line, while they still retain their hold. After you get them to the top of the water, you may by a steady sudden jerk, land several at once. It requires some practice and expertness to do the thing cleverly. Some fishermen use a fine scoop net, instead of jerking out the eels in the manner described.

Pot-fishing for eels is a very simple process, and is practiced by those only who get a living by fishing. A long coarsely made circular basket is used, with ends like inverted cones. The basket is usually three or four and a half feet long, and seven or eight inches through. At the end of the cones, which run inward, are holes just big enough for the eel to squeeze through, and when he once gets in he is not

apt to find his way out again. The basket is well baited with the entrails of fowls, or of fish, with bits of fish, or meat, shad-roes, or almost any offal. One end comes off to admit this bait. Weights sufficient to sink the basket close to the bottom should first be tied well inside so it will lay flat on its side, and strong cords fastened to it to enable you to lower it to the proper place, as well as to raise it when it is full of eels. Eel-traps like these will sometimes take several dozen at a time.

Spearing eels is another mode which fishermen employ to advantage. The spears are forced down in the mud where the eels have buried themselves, and in some places eels are taken in great abundance in this way. You can spear from a boat, or while wading in the water where it is shallow enough The eel spear has several flat prongs, and takes the eel as described in the engraved representation below. These spears can be purchased at the fishing-tackle stores, or an expert blacksmith can make them. The prongs are of steel.

The Flounder.

This is an odd-looking fish, his belly being on one side and his back on the other. He is shaped something like the sun-fish or pumpkin seed, and on the edges, where the belly and back of an ordinary fish would naturally be, he has continuous fins from neck to tail. The back is of a dark color, both eyes being on that side, and guaged to look upwards at an angle about one-fifth forward from perpendicular; and his belly is usually white. The size of the flounder varies from five to fifteen, and sometimes to twenty-four inches in length, the breadth being about one-half the length. Their feeding ground is the soft mud of the bottom, near to bridge spiles, docks, and other bottom incumbrances, and they are sometimes found on bass grounds. They feed on the spawn of fishes, and on muscles and insects.

The time for fishing the flounder is the spring and fall months. In the summer he may be taken, but his flesh is soft and unwholesome. He will bite at almost anything used in salt water for fish bait, and in fishing him you may use any kind of tackle. A small hook is however necessary—No. 8 being the usual size. Flounders are an excellent pan fish; but they should be cooked as soon as possible after being taken. They are very plentiful on the shores of Long Island Sound, in New York Bay, and in the inlets of New Jersey. The Boston market is abundantly supplied with them from the numerous fishing grounds of that neighborhood.

The Cod Fish.

This salt water fish is caught is great abundance in the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts, and on the Great Banks. It swims in immense schools, and is very easily taken. In the spring the cod will bite in the most greedy manner, and if your tackle be strong enough, you can catch enormous quantities, and of very large size. The mud clam, or the moss bunker, either of them will answer for bait. Your line should be very stout, and made of cotton or hemp, 100 to 150 feet long, with the largest size black-fish hook, or a regular cod hook of small size. The sinker should weigh two or three pounds. Cod are not at all particular, and are not easily frightened. It sometimes happens that one may be lost off the hook by tearing the cartilege of his mouth. This same fish, with his mutilated muzzle, will be just as apt to bite again the next moment. They are fished for with hand lines, from boats, in all cases.

The cod fish, when fresh, is excellent eating, whether boiled or fried. It is a standard dish at the hotels and eating houses in Boston and New York.

The Sheepshead.

This is one of the very best of salt water fish, and like many others, only visits shore in summer. The time for fishing him is from the first of June until the middle of September. The Sheepshead is a squatty shaped fish of a dull silvery color, and with dark bands running from his back to his belly. His weight

is usually two or three pounds—sometimes four and a half. The form of his face, which is somewhat smutty, is supposed to resemble the physiognomy of a sheep, though for the life of us we never could see the resemblance. The teeth, however, do look like sheep's teeth, and this may be the more rational cause of its name. These teeth enables a fish of good size to crunch the shell of a crab with ease. They are usually found on reefs, or about large rocks, where they feed on the soft clam, and the small rock crab, which articles are used for bait in fishing the sheepshead. The tackle wanted is a stout hemp or cotton line, 100 to 150 feet long, with a black-fish hook of the largest size. The clam must be put on whole, without breaking the shell. Insert your hook through its stem, and bury it entirely in the body of the clam. He takes the whole clam in at a mouthful, and chews it, shell and all. If you use crabs, take the same precaution as with clams. Sometimes opened clams (soft or hard) are used, but they should be of very large size, to attract the fish's attention. He will also bite at the worm, the minnow, the chub, and the lobster. When you have struck a sheepshead, you must be exceedingly cautious while playing him, or you may lose your game. He makes the most desperate efforts to get free, frequently bunting his head against a rock so as to break the hook.

Of late years this fish has become scarce in the Long Island waters, and experienced fishermen are in the habit of tolling them to certain haunts by

throwing in soft clams. In this way they are brought so near to shore as to be taken with a stout rod, and strong tackle, though the usual mode of fishing them is from a boat with a hand line. When using the rod, you should have a landing net, or you may lose all your fish. They generally go in schools, and if you catch one you may get a good string of them. They are considered by some people the best eating sea fish that is caught, though their meat is a little tough. If cooked properly, they do make an excellent dish. They should be split in slices and broiled on the gridiron. The sheepshead is caught in nearly all the rocky places round Long Island. Regular fishermen use nets and spears with good success. Spearing them by torchlight is a favorite amusement with some sportsmen.

The Black Fish.

This fish was called the tautog by the Indians. It is caught in the vicinity of Massachusetts and New York Bays, in Long Island Sound, and in nearly all the inlets of Rhode Island. Of late years, black fish have increased in numbers, notwithstanding the numbers caught to supply the Boston and New York markets. The upper end of Long Island is a famous place to catch them. Their feeding ground is generally on rocky bottoms, and reefs, though they are caught in other places. It is a singular fact that those found close in on rocky reefs are shorter or more chubby, and of a darker color, than those that

TAUTOG, OR BLACK-FISH.

sport in the running tide. The color is a deep bluish black on the back and sides, with light belly. The usual size of the black fish varies from one to three pounds, though larger ones have been caught. Eight and ten pounders are reported to have been taken in Rhode Island.

Black fish are usually caught with hand lines from a boat, though your true sportsman prefers his rod—a stiff one some twelve or fifteen feet long. A flax line of ten to thirty yards in length, with slide sinker, and triple gut snells, is all that you want. You can dispense with the gut if you wish, as the fish is not timid or wary, and a plain flax leader of ten to fifteen inches in length, will answer. You can catch them with almost any kind of a hook from No. 10 downwards. They frequent eddies made by the running tide, and there watch for shrimps or small crabs. By dropping your line back, and letting it run with the tide through an eddy, you are generally successful. As soon as the fish bites in earnest, pull up, starting your pull by a quick motion to fasten the hook in his mouth, which is tough and hard. The baits used are shrimp, soft crab, shedder lobster, soft clam, ordinary clam, &c. The crabs and lobsters are the best. If a thunder storm comes up while you are fishing for black fish, you may as well go home, as you will not be apt to catch any more that day. A school of porpoises will frighten them so that they will leave for the day. There is a good deal of sport in catching black fish, his bite is so

earnest, and he is so readily taken. In hand line fishing, many sportsmen have a brass ring at the end of their line, and to it they fasten two or three leaders, of different lengths, sometimes catching two fish at a time by this means.

The black fish begins to bite early in April, and is then easily taken. As the hot weather comes on he is not very fierce for a bait, but yet he is taken all the season through, until the cold weather benumbs him, and he refuses to eat. He never runs into fresh water, but remains in his haunts the year through. It is an excellent table fish, whether stewed or fried, though it is very difficult to dress.

The Mackerel.

This fish is seldom sought after by amateur anglers, for the reason that he does not frequent bays or inlets, but is found only in the broad ocean. He is nevertheless a game fish, and his capture affords a great deal of sport. The professional fishermen describe the mackerel as the handsomest fish that swims, and the most active on the hook. The season to fish mackerel commences about the first of May. A fishing smack, which can cruise with safety "out at sea," must be procured, and an experienced fisherman who knows the haunts of mackerel, should be engaged. The hook used is called the mackerel hook. It is about the size of No. 0 Limerick salmon, but shaped a little different. The necessary bait is only a piece of red flannel, or red cloth. They can

also be taken by trolling, with a tin squid, or jig. This is an oblong piece of bright block tin, with a hook fastened on the end of it, and a swivel on the end of your line. The tin skitters along on the surface, and, being mistaken by the mackerel for a shiner, he darts at it and is instantly hooked. The sport is excellent, as the fish bites so readily and so fiercely.

Shark, and Devil Fishing.

Shark fishing is a stupendous sport resorted to by persons who have a hankering after excitement. Parties who go on shark-fishing expeditions, engage a vessel for the purpose, together with experienced hands as assistants. The ship-chandler furnishes them with lines, while a blacksmith is engaged to make hooks, swivels, &c., of the sizes wanted. The line is a strong hemp cord made for the purpose, and hooks of various patterns are used. Almost any shaped hook will catch a shark, provided it is strong enough to hold him. When you get to your shark-ing ground, you launch your small boat, and tie your line to the stern. The hook should be fastened to it by a chain and swivel, and is baited with a good sized piece of beef or pork. You then row your boat along rapidly until you get a bite. Do not get too far from your vessel, as when you once get a bite, and hook the monster, you must bring him along side before you attempt to land him, or he may upset you in his wrath.

Catching the devil-fish is a favorite amusement of the South Carolinians. These monsters frequent the sounds and inlets thereabout in schools, and are killed in various ways—by harpooning, shooting, &c. The sizes of the fish thus taken are from twenty to thirty feet long. After being struck with a harpoon, the devil-fish will sometimes run many miles, towing a boat full of men after him. The sport of taking them is very exciting.

Take Care of Your Tools.

The *American Angler's Guide* gives the following precautions relative to the care of rods and lines: When the fishing season is over, your rod should not be thrown carelessly by, but be cleaned, nicely oiled, and put away in a cool place, in readiness for the next campaign. The best of wood that a rod can be composed of, even though it be kiln-dried, if exposed a length of time in a dry atmosphere will shrink some, causing the ferules and guides to become loose. A moist atmosphere is preferable to a dry one. When rods that have not the ends covered where the joints are put together, become by a day's service swelled and dificult to separate, hold the ferule over a candle or lighted paper until it becomes sufficiently hot to dry out the moisture, and the parts can be easily separated. To prevent this annoyance, occasionally oil the wooden part that is let into the socket.

Lines.—Many adepts in the art are careless and neglectful of their lines, often leaving them (when

soaked with water) on their rods, in which wet state, if they long continue, they are apt to mildew and rot. Every line, immediately after being used, should be run off from the reel and laid out freely, or stretched on pegs to dry. Should they have been lying by for any length of time, they should be thoroughly examined and tried in every part before using. Lines will chafe and fray out by constant wear, and many large fish are often lost by carelessness in these small but important matters.

To tie a Hook to a Gut or Line.—Prepare, by waxing with shoemaker's wax, a piece of strong silk or thread; take your hook in your left hand between your thumb and forefinger, about as high up as the point of the barb or a little higher, as you may fancy; place the end of your silk under your thumb, take three or four random but firm turns around the shank of the hook until you reach the end (for the purpose of preventing the gut being cut by the hook, and moreover that your gut may stick firmly without the possibility of coming off;) now lay your gut or line (the inside of the hook, up) on to this winding, holding it with the end of the thumb, and commence whipping it around firmly and closely, occasionally pressing the turns to keep them even; continue this operation until you get within three or four turns of the finishing point; in order to fasten firmly—give three loose turns, then insert the end of your silk under them, and drawing it through, you have a secure fastening, called the hidden knot. Another method

of finishing when you have arrived at the fastening point, is to make two or three half hitch knots; this is done by passing the end under one turn of the silk, making a loop, and drawing it down. The hidden knot is the better and most secure mode.

To repair a Broken Joint.—Should you be so unfortunate as to break a top or joint, which misfortune, brother angler, has happened to many a very careful and scientific sportsman before you—proceed in this manner. Take your two broken parts, and with your knife, or a plane if you can get one, smooth down each part in an oblique direction, fitting them closely together, and rubbing some shoemaker's wax on to the parts to make them stick; now take a long length of waxed thread or silk and wind it around, similar to the commencement of hook-tying, merely to keep the parts together, continuing it a little beyond the extreme end of the fracture; then carefully and firmly whip it evenly around until you pass the other end of the fracture; here halt, and wind the three last turns on the forefinger of the left hand, extended for that purpose; now pass the end of the silk or thread under the windings, carefully drawing out your finger, and pull it through, and you have the hidden or inverted knot, as before described. Be careful in finishing, see that your thread does not get loose, and your whippings are firm and even. In all cases of winding, see that your silk is well waxed.

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